

## Best Practices of BYU Alumni Chapters

1. **Establish a good Chapter Board** - A strong and supportive Chapter Board or Chapter Leadership Committee is essential to the long term health of a chapter. This group of supporters will become fast friends. They are willing to engage and take lead roles as activity preparations go forward. Chapter Chairs need to make this a priority. Start by asking the question 'who gets things done?' Once you identify some of these movers and shakers, ask them the same question. As Chapters begin building this board, it is expected they will look for people they know. Efforts should be made to get a larger area of their Chapter represented on the board, i.e., getting representatives from various stakes in the area..

2. **Make a Chapter Plan** - Commit early to what the chapter activities are going to be for the year and place them on a calendar. Once the calendar is set, post activities on the website. The Chapter and its leaders are then committed to move forward. This announces the vision of what the Chapter is accomplishing. The Chapter can then stop thinking about the plan and begin forming committees and securing early commitments and volunteers to fulfill the various activities

3. **Engage Volunteers** - There are many strong alumni in each chapter area. Who are they? By developing a network of interested people, finding volunteers can be as easy as putting out a word of mouth request. The Alumni Association can provide lists of alumni in the area. From this list the WSI and Giving codes can be one marker for possible volunteers.

Once a potential volunteer is identified, a direct ask from the person they will be answering to is appropriate. Before that ask is made, the following questions need to be resolved:

- 1- What is the job they will be asked to do?
- 2- How long will it take to complete this job (in hours and in days)?
- 3- Why is this important enough to ask them to do the job?
- 4- Who is this job going to benefit?

4. **Communication** - Communication with alumni is a critical issue. The more Chapters communicate with their alumni, the more interest is developed. Alumni begin to see the Chapter as a relevant entity as they receive regular communication from the Chapter. This also leads to finding new people to get involved.

E-mail communication is becoming more and more effective. Chapters can send a broadcast email to their chapter whenever they have a relevant message to share. Chapters are encouraged to increase the coverage of email addresses in their area by contacting the individuals without email address on their alumni lists and sharing that information with BYU.

5. **LDS Church Recognition** – Alumni Chapter recognition from LDS Church leaders must be earned by each chapter in their own area. This recognition will not be given to BYU Alumni Chapters through any letter from a church authority or any other sort of official decree. Each chapter should endeavor to discover the concerns and desires of the local church leaders and provide a way to meet those concerns.

6. **Good boards hold regular meetings** – A regular set of scheduled meetings is important for a well functioning chapter. These meetings become urgent when activities are imminent. When there is not a specific event to plan, regular meetings serves to solidify the board and allow the brainstorming of new ideas. Formal, working meetings are the norm, but informal board meetings held at someone’s home or yard is encouraged. A diversity of opinions and ideas helps foster greater interest in participating and coming up with activities.

7. **Dynamic Leadership** – The turnover of chapter leadership while maintaining an experienced Chapter Board is desirable. A former chapter chairman, serving as an event coordinator, strengthens the board in a number of ways. It allows the current chairman to focus on the big picture and takes the pressure of every activity off their shoulders. It encourages new volunteers to do more and stay involved longer. It assures that the event is being handled with experience.

8. **Connected for Good with small “Spirit of the Y” group events** - Small groups will often form naturally for athletic events. Hence, some groups aren’t planned, they just occur. Beyond these, chapters are encouraged to organize a system of “hosts” for such events. Themes can be assigned to “small events” and a hosting couple assigned to invite the participants. Participants should consist of known alumni as well as alumni that are new to the area or unknown to the hosting couple.

- a) “BYU Memories” night
- b) “How we met at BYU” dinner
- c) Gatherings for a game watch party
- d) service activity such as writing letters to local BYU students including personal feelings and experiences while attending BYU
- e) write letters to servicemen, or, have a small group invite over a family whose spouse is serving overseas
- f) etc.

Chapters should identify 5 to 10 couples to host these small activities. The hosts are to be given a list of alumni in the immediate area and asked to call a certain number, inviting them to their house for the activity. The emphasis is to connect to new people.

Other thoughts on this topic: Share inspirational BYU videos in these small groups. This would rekindle feelings towards BYU. Have a quarterly/every six months “theme” or activity for these group activities. Expand the hosts as the program develops. Even if only 3 or 4 couples got together, it would be a success.